

Amendment dated August 26, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated February 28, 2005

Application No. 10/045,122

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for selectively interacting with electrically excitable tissue of a patient, said apparatus comprising:
 - an implantable pulse generator having a number of output sources to transmit electrical signals;
 - an implantable electrode array having a number of electrodes, wherein the number of electrodes is greater than the number of output sources; and
 - an extension unit coupled between the implantable pulse generator and the implantable electrode array, the extension unit being distant from the implantable pulse generator relative to the electrode array and configured to electrically connect the output sources to a portion of the electrodes, the extension unit including a first electrical path between the implantable pulse generator and the extension unit and a second electrical path between the extension unit and the electrode array, the first electrical path being greater than the second electrical path.
2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the extension unit comprises an array of programmable switches.
3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the implantable electrode array includes at least one biomedical sensor.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electrodes are arranged in a line.
5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electrodes are arranged in a multi-dimensional array.
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Currently amended) An apparatus for selectively interacting with electrically excitable tissue of a patient, said apparatus comprising:

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an extension unit adapted to be that electrically connected to connects an implantable pulse generator having a number of output sources to an implantable electrode array having a number of electrodes, wherein the number of electrodes is greater than the number of output sources, the extension unit comprising:

an array of programmable switches, each switch being connected between one output source and at least a portion of the electrodes, wherein ~~the output sources are at least one switch is configured to simultaneously trigger a plurality of electrodes.~~

8. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 7, further including:

a programming logic unit, coupled to the array of programmable switches, that receives programming signals and produces signals for configuring the programmable switches.

9. (Original) The extension unit of claim 7, wherein the array of switches comprises micro-relay switches that retain their switching state after power has been removed.

10. (Original) The extension unit of claim 7, further including an array of wave shaping circuits coupled to the array of switches and the output sources.

11. (Original) The extension unit of claim 10, wherein at least some of the wave shaping circuits are configured to change the frequency of signals received on the output sources.

12. (Original) The extension unit of claim 10, wherein at least some of the wave shaping circuits are configured to change the amplitude of signals received on the output sources.

13. (Original) The extension unit of claim 7, wherein the array of switches comprises mechanically adjustable switches.

14. (Original) The extension unit of claim 7, wherein the array of switches comprises magnetically adjustable switches.

15. (Withdrawn) A method of selectively providing electrical therapeutic treatment to a patient comprising the steps of:

implanting an electrode array having a number of electrodes near electrically excitable tissue of a patient;

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implanting a pulse generator having a number of output sources in the patient, the number of output sources being less than the number of electrodes;

implanting an extension unit between the electrode array and the pulse generator, the extension unit electrically connects the output sources to a portion of the electrodes;

determining which electrodes would provide optimal therapeutic treatment; and

configuring the extension unit to electrically couple the output sources to the electrodes identified in the determining step.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the extension unit includes an array of programmable switches; and the configuring step comprises adjusting the positions of the switches.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the determining step is performed by the patient.

18. (Withdrawn) A method of selectively measuring diagnostic information from a patient using an array of biomedical sensors, the method comprising the steps of:

implanting an array having a number of biomedical sensors in a patient

implanting a diagnostic device having a number of input sources in the patient, the number of input sources being less than the number of biomedical sensors;

implanting an extension unit between the array of biomedical sensors and the diagnostic device, the extension unit electrically connecting the input sources to a portion of the biomedical sensors;

determining which biomedical sensors would provide optimal diagnostic information; and

configuring the extension unit to electrically couple the output sources to the biomedical sensors identified in the determining step.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the array of biomedical sensors includes an electrode.

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20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the extension unit includes an array of programmable switches; and the configuring step comprises adjusting the positions of the switches.

21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the determining step is performed by the patient.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, further including the step of providing therapeutic treatment to the patient with the electrode.

23. (Currently amended) An extension unit that electrically connects a distant diagnostic device having a number of input sources to an array of biomedical sensors, wherein the number of biomedical sensors is greater than the number of input sources, the extension unit comprising:

an array of programmable switches, each switch capable of being connected between one input source of the distant diagnostic device and at least a portion of the biomedical sensors, wherein ~~the switches are~~ at least one switch is configured to simultaneously trigger a plurality of electrodes.

24. (Previously presented) An apparatus for selectively measuring diagnostic information from a patient, said apparatus comprising:

a diagnostic device having a number of input sources that receive electrical signals;

a lead including an implantable biomedical sensor array having a number of biomedical sensors, wherein the number of biomedical sensors is greater than the number of input sources; and

an extension unit as set forth in claim 23.

25. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein a first distance between the implantable diagnostic device and the programmable switches of the extension unit is greater than a second distance between the programmable switches of the extension unit and the biomedical sensor array.

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26. (Currently amended) An extension unit for electrically connecting an distant implantable pulse generator having a number of output sources to a lead including an implantable electrode array having a number of electrodes, wherein the number of electrodes in the implantable electrode array is greater than the number of output sources of the implantable pulse generator, the extension unit comprising:

input lines for receiving input signals from the output sources of the distant implantable pulse generator;

output lines for electrical connection with the electrodes of the implantable electrode array;

an array of programmable switches, each switch being connected between one input line and at least a portion of the output lines, wherein the switches are configured to simultaneously trigger a plurality of electrodes; and

whereby the extension unit enables an distant implantable pulse generator having a number of output sources to be used with a lead having an electrode array with a number of electrodes greater than the number of output sources.

27. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 26, further including:

a programmable logic unit, coupled to the array of programmable switches, that receives programming signals and produces signals for configuring the programmable switches.

28. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 27, wherein the array of switches comprises micro-relay switches that retain their switching state after power has been removed.

29. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 28, further including an array of wave shaping circuits coupled to the array of switches and the output sources.

30. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 29, wherein at least some of the wave shaping circuits are configured to change the frequency of signals received on the output sources.

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31. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 20, wherein at least some of the wave shaping circuits are configured to change the amplitude of signals received on the output sources.

32. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 29, wherein at least some of the wave shaping circuits are configured to change the amplitude of signals received on the output sources.

33. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 26, wherein the array of switches comprises micro-relay switches that retain their switching state after power has been removed.

34. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 26, further including an array of wave shaping circuits coupled to the array of switches and the output sources.

35. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 34, wherein at least some of the wave shaping circuits are configured to change the frequency of signals received on the output sources.

36. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 35, wherein at least some of the wave shaping circuits are configured to change the amplitude of signals received on the output sources.

37. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 34, wherein at least some of the wave shaping circuits are configured to change the amplitude of signals received on the output sources.

38. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 26, wherein the array of switches comprises mechanically adjustable switches.

39. (Previously presented) The extension unit of claim 26, wherein the array of switches comprises magnetically adjustable switches.

40. (Previously presented) An apparatus for selectively interacting with electrically excitable tissue of a patient, said apparatus comprising:

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an implantable pulse generator having a number of output sources to transmit electrical signals;

a lead including an implantable electrode array having a number of electrodes, wherein the number of electrodes is greater than the number of output sources; and
an extension unit as set forth in claim 26.

41. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the implantable electrode array includes at least one biomedical sensor.

42. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the electrodes are arranged in a line.

43. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the electrodes are arranged in a multi-dimensional array.

44. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein a first distance between the implantable pulse generator and the programmable switches of the extension unit is greater than a second distance between the programmable switches of the extension unit and the implantable electrode array.

45. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15 wherein the step of determining which electrodes would provide optimal therapeutic treatment includes:

determining which electrodes are physically positioned to provide optimal therapeutic treatment.

46. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15 wherein the step of determining which biomedical sensors would provide optimal diagnostic information includes:

determining which biomedical sensors are physically positioned to provide optimal diagnostic information.

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